



Duty to Cooperate meeting between St Albans DC and Dacorum BC

VENUE: Via MS Teams

DATE: 6 September 2023 @ 12.30

AGENDA

1. Introductions
 - SADC - Cllr White, Chris Briggs (CB)
 - DBC - Cllr Tindall, Cllr Wilkie, James Doe (JD), Sara Whelan (SW), Ronan Leydon (RL)

2. Update on St Albans Local Plan
 - a. Timetable for new Local Plan
 - CB – Outlined SADC’s current LDS and its timescales – Reg 19 summer 2024, submission by end of 2024 and adoption by end of 2025

 - b. SADC current Local Plan Reg 18 consultation
 - CB – Current SADC LP Reg 18 is essentially a full draft Local Plan with full draft Policies and a full set of draft allocations
 - CB – LP approach to Housing - meeting Government’s Standard Method in full – which is circa 900 homes per annum and circa 15,000+ homes over the Plan period to 2041
 - CB – the approach to housing in the urban areas is to ‘leave no stone unturned’ – but only amounts to circa 5,000 of the 15,000
 - CB - A further circa 5,000 homes directly from the Green Belt Review
 - CB - A further circa 5,000 homes from sites which acknowledge further Green Belt harm, but provide significant Economic, Social and Environmental advantages – includes part of Hemel Garden Communities (HGC)
 - CB – lots of joint work SADC/DBC/ HGC to get to agreed wording in SADC LP Reg 18 on HGC
 - CB - LP approach to Employment – meeting SADC need and because of two large sites – the Government permitted Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and East Hemel Central
 - SW – check on SADC timetable for LP towards Reg 19 – CB – reports will go to Planning Policy & Climate Committee on Development Management and similar non-site based policies from Jan 2024 and then site-based aspects and whole draft Plan in June and July 2024.

 - c. Evidence base update

CB – Moving forward jointly with DBC and SWH partners on joint SWH work – eg updated Housing and Employment studies

CB – SADC are doing further work on Gypsy & Traveller need and provision – will likely need significantly more allocations by time of Reg 19

CB – SADC has signed up with HCC for a ‘Comet 7.1 run’ of the HCC’s Transport model to support the LP Reg 19

3. Update on Dacorum Local Plan

a. Local Plan update

SW – going through options with new administration

SW – LP Reg 18 consultation - current direction of travel to be autumn 2023, but subject to further discussions and further work

JD – DBC will be more certain and can then be explicit and public once been through full political processes – which is hopefully not far away
Cllr Tindall – once able to – both SADC and DBC to exchange LDS details and for officers to update each other if there is any future change from LDS timetables – CB - agreed

b. Evidence base update

RL – agree with CB on value of SWH joint work and HGC joint work

RL – using Aecom for DBC Sustainability Appraisal work and Habitat Regulations Assessment work – who are the same consultants as SADC

RL – will have a new Viability Assessment for the new Reg 18 - HGH including Simon Drummond Hay undertaking the work

RL – For LP Reg 19 – looking at Heritage Impact Assessments for larger allocations

RL – Further work on Transport being undertaken

4. Potential Strategic Cross Boundary Issues, inc.

a) SADC DtC officer workshop 6 September 2022, SADC letter 4 November 2022 and DBC letter 9 December 2022

CB – thanks for the response to the 4 November 2022 letter. SADC have added DBC to the DtC Matrix under Water and Waste Water. SADC will write formally again on potential unmet need after this meeting

b) SADC Updated Local Plan Reg 18 version of the DtC Matrix

CB – briefly outlined the matrix and hope DBC agree it is a reasonable reflection of the relevant issues

SW - support the matrix - only query is that given cross-boundary issues and exiting joint work on the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation etc. as well as other work, think should add DBC to the

matrix under 'Green and Blue infrastructure' – CB – on reflection agree and will add

Cllr Tindall – query about local power networks – especially with the rise in use of electric vehicles etc.

CB – SADC has addressed through the IDP and engagement with electricity providers (UKPN) – providers have said can be provided for with substantial upgrades to existing facilities and shouldn't be a limitation

c) Potential unmet needs from St Albans DC

CB – asked if DBC has any capacity to provide for SADC potential unmet needs - JD – no, as before

JD – DBC acknowledge has some non-GB land in north of the Borough – still confirm DBC continues to look at this area but does not consider it appropriate for significant growth – CB – acknowledged DBC's position

d) Potential sites near LPA boundaries

CB – HGC and also SADC LP additional secondary school allocations to assist DBC with long term needs arising in Hemel that joint HCC/DBC/SADC work indicates will be very difficult to provide elsewhere in/around Hemel

JD – acknowledge good joint work on the issue that assists DBC with planning for school needs for Hemel

CB/JD – looking forward to updated evidence from HCC on the issue
CB – raised the longstanding challenge DBC face around the most appropriate solutions for an enlarged Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) for Hemel and the challenges that exist around Gypsy & Traveller provision – there has been lots of joint work to get to the current position in the SADC draft LP

SW – acknowledge work done to date on these challenging issues – but moving forward DBC consider there is potential for further joint work on both HWRC and Gypsy & Traveller provision – CB – happy to look at joint evidence and joint work on these issues

JD – agree HWRC is a long term matter that we should be able to work on jointly

JD – on HWRC – regular Director meetings might be an avenue for looking at HWRC and related Cupid Green Depot issues – asked CT is there an opportunity to scope something wider here?

CT – yes, agreed to look at

JD – Gypsy and Traveller need and provision is a significant issue for DBC as well and DBC do have to raise that Gypsy & Traveller provision at HGC may be a matter of difference between the Councils down the line – CB – acknowledge that position

Cllr Tindall – a joint sub-group to look at the Gypsy & Traveller issues will help both Councils

Cllr White – agree that joint working on both Gypsy & Traveller issues and HWRC would be helpful to both

SW – have other Councils raised the G&T issue? Eg Three Rivers and would it be most effective to look at these issues as part of a wider group of councils?

CB – open to a wider group – but initial feeling is more effective bilateral DBC and SADC – much of the issue is around the ‘accident of history’ that a significant amount of DBC provision is on the east of the Borough near the SADC border and in SADC the location of HGC is such that there is a significant amount of provision proposed on the west side near the DBC border

SW/JD – agree probably best looked at bilaterally

Cllr Tindall – moving forward on HGC am interested in the potential for a primary care hub to be provided – CB – SADC support the principle and are happy to see how the issue can best be addressed

5. Arrangements for future DtC working and SOCG

a) Timetable for producing

CB – Aim to have an updated draft DtC Matrix and a draft SoCG by time of Reg 19 in 2024 and to get a signed SoCG by time of LP submission end of 2024 – SW – support this approach

6. A.O.B and Date of Next Meeting

CB – intention for next Cllr DtC meeting alongside SADC LP Reg 19 in September 2024 – clearly lots of other joint working going on with HGC, SWH JSP, joint evidence etc

Cllr Tindall – can put in periodic eg quarterly Cllr DtC meetings as easier to cancel if not needed than to add

JD – will have DBC LP Reg 18 hopefully not too far away

All – agreed officers will work up some interim Cllr DtC dates prior to September 2024 – will work out periodicity, how best to fit with other meetings and how most appropriately to badge them

RL – SADC LP Reg 18 Exhibition at Leverstock Green event on Friday 8 September – will be one DBC officer there

Cllr Wilkie – thanks to SADC for putting on the Leverstock Green Event – CB – SADC happy to as part of joint working